

RECORD OF CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

- A. **Proposed Action:** Western Area Power Administration (Western) Desert Southwest Region replaced the overhead ground wire, which contains a fiber optic line, between Structures 11/5 and 13/2 on the Mead Marketplace 500-kV Transmission Line located southwest of Boulder City, Clark County, Nevada. The fiber optic line was damaged by gunfire in multiple places, initially failed in December 2009, and tests after an emergency repair in February 2010 revealed additional damage. The line transmits commands and relays metering data needed for the safe and reliable distribution of 1600 megawatts of electricity, which is enough to power 400,000 households, and its failure would lead to a blackout.

The replacement work used bucket trucks, crew trucks, cranes, reel trucks, spool trailers, splice truck (e.g., minivan), and truck-mounted cable tensioners to remove the fiber optic line and install a new one. A helicopter was used to hold or fly in the fiber optic line.

The project area is located east of US 95 and south of US 93 near Boulder City, Clark County, Nevada. It occurs in Sections 20, 28, and 29 in Township 23 South, Range 64 East on the Mount Diablo Baseline and Meridian. It occurs at the north end of Eldorado Valley. Western administers control over the land.

Western began this work on November 29, 2010 and finished on December 14, 2010.

- B. **Categorical Exclusion Applied:** 10 CFR, Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B, B4.7: "Adding fiber optic cable to transmission structures or burying fiber optic cable in an existing transmission line rights-of-way."

C. **Regulatory Requirements in 10 CFR 1021.410 (b):**

- a. The proposed action fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix B to Subpart D.
 - i. The proposed action was reviewed for the requirements of the Endangered Species Act, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the National Historic Preservation Act, and all applicable Department of Energy Orders.
 - ii. The proposed action does not require the siting, construction, or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities.
 - iii. The proposed action does not disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA-excluded petroleum and

natural gas products that pre-exist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled and unpermitted releases.

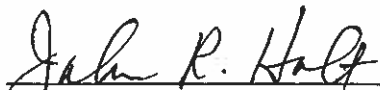
- iv. The proposed action was reviewed and surveyed for impacts to cultural and sensitive biological resources. Cultural and sensitive biological resources have been determined to not be affected.

- b. There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal; and
- c. The proposal is not "connected" to other actions with potentially significant impacts, is not related to other proposed actions with cumulatively significant impacts, and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211.

D. **Determination:** Based on my review of information conveyed to me and in my possession (or attached) concerning the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (as authorized under DOE Order 451.1A), I have determined that the proposed action fits within the specified class of actions, the other regulatory requirements set forth above are met, and the proposed action is hereby categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

E. **Special Conditions:**

- a. Western implemented the terms and conditions identified in the project's Biological Opinion (84320-2010-F-0368) prepared by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Nevada office, dated 9/24/2010. These terms and conditions are attached.



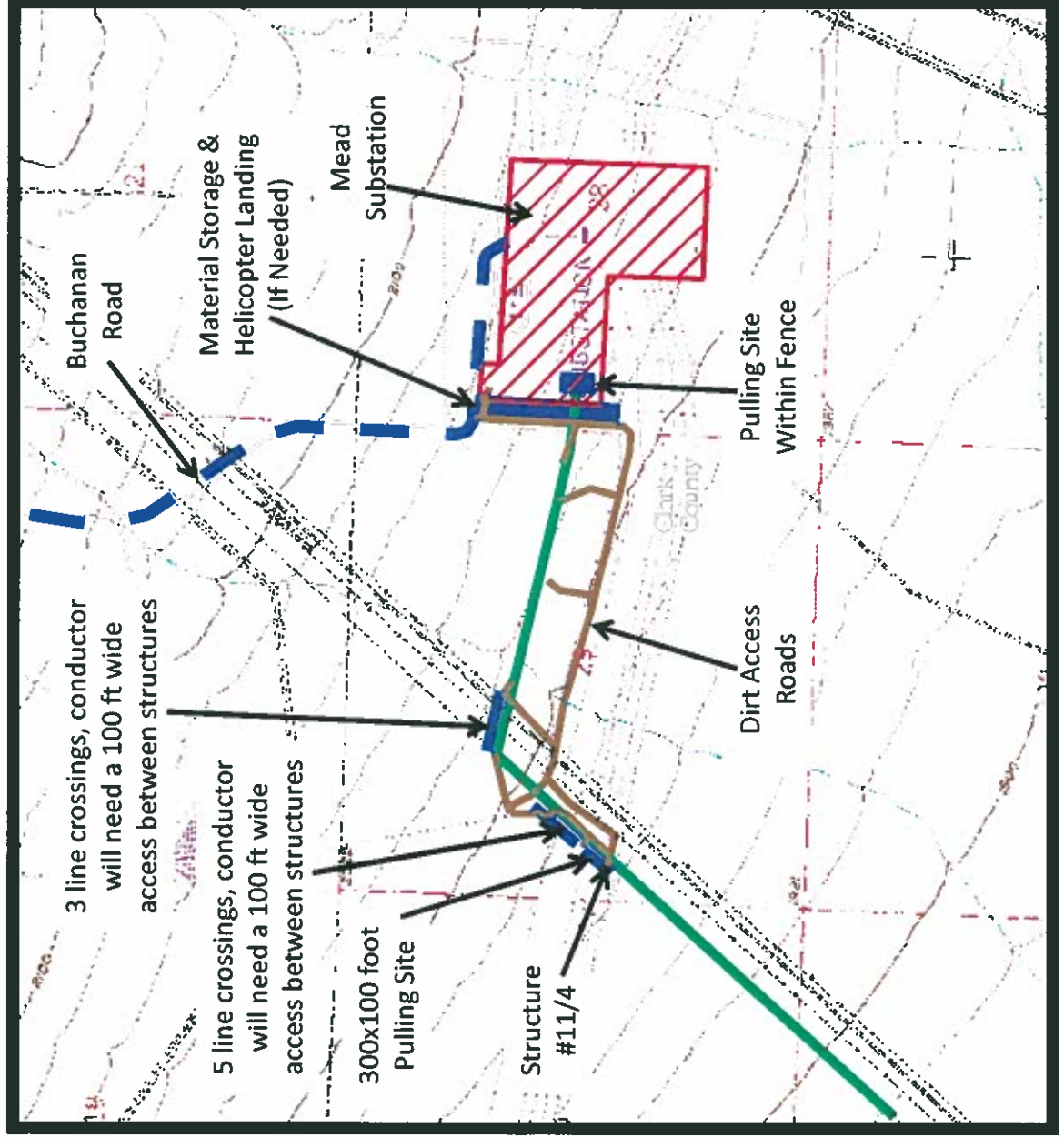
John R. Holt
NEPA Compliance Officer

2/07/11
Date

Mead-Marketplace 500-kV Transmission Line

Fiber-Optic Cable Replacement Between Structure 11/5 & Mead Substation

*Contractor will require a 50 foot radius around all structures



Legal Description

Sections	Township	Range
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28 & 29	23 S	64 E
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Transmission Line

Substation

Dirt Access Road

Paved Access Road



Western Area Power Administration
An agency of the U.S. Department of Energy